

17 November 1977

MEMORANDUM FOR: NIOs and Office Directors

FROM : Associate Director, Substantive Support, NFAC

SUBJECT : Presidential Briefings

1. This memorandum describes the system of selecting topics for and preparing Presidential Briefings by the DCI. An objective is to allow selection of suitable subjects three weeks to a month before the actual briefing of the President in order to allow orderly development of the briefing package by appropriate NFAC personnel.

2. A rotating scheme of topic submissions will be used. For this purpose NIOs and Office Directors have been assigned to the following groups:

<u>Group I</u>		<u>Group II</u>		<u>Group III</u>		<u>Group IV</u>	
NIO	CF	NIO	SP	NIO	PE	NIO	NP
	SS		USSR		WE		NESA
	AF		EAP		CH		LA
DIR	OER	DIR	OGCR	DIR	OSR	DIR	ORPA
	OSI		OWI		OIA		OCR

3. Each member of Group I will submit a proposed Presidential Briefing topic by COB on the first Tuesday of each month, Group II the second Tuesday of the month, etc. To initiate this process, the members of Group III should submit a proposed topic by COB Tuesday, 22 November 1977.

4. In addition to a descriptive title of the proposed topic, a brief note on timing considerations for the briefing should be included. For example, a timing consideration might be to brief the President prior to the visit of a certain head of state (xx Feb. 1978)

5. Topics for Presidential Briefings should be intelligence issues of current interest, rather than current intelligence items per se. They should be subjects that you feel the Director should spend 5 to 10 minutes (of his weekly 30 minutes with the President) briefing the President. Therefore, they should not be items which can be adequately addressed in the PDB. Topics submitted should be suitable for briefing of the President three weeks to a month after submission.

6. Topics selected for development into Presidential Briefings will be announced by memorandum on the Thursday following their submission. A one-page outline of the major points to be addressed in the briefing should then be submitted by COB the following Tuesday. This outline will be submitted to the Director for comments and approval. A decision to proceed on development of the formal briefing package will be announced. This formal briefing package, consisting of a briefing paper, proposed graphics, and relevant background material, should be compiled and submitted one to two weeks after the announcement of the DCI's decision to proceed (exact date to be worked out with the Presidential Briefing Coordinator).

7. An example of the system follows:

29 November 1977 - D/ORPA submits proposed topic on Poland with note that subject should be briefed prior to end of year.

30 November 1977 - Memo from Presidential Briefing Coordinator announces item on Poland is one of several subjects selected for possible briefing of the President.

6 December 1977 - D/ORPA submits one-page outline on briefing on Poland.

12 December 1977 - DCI accepts outline of Poland briefing.

21 December 1977 - D/ORPA submits briefing package on Poland.

26 December 1977 - Poland briefing is reviewed at pre-briefing.

27 December 1977 - Presidential Briefing of Poland topic.

8. Attached are some desiderata for weekly Presidential briefing topics.

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Attachments:
As Stated Above

Desiderata For Weekly Presidential Briefing Topics

The subjects which will receive extensive preparation are of two kinds, substantive intelligence subjects and intelligence craft subjects. The following criteria apply to selection of subjects:

A. Criteria for all topics

1. Timeliness Subjects should not be ephemeral current intelligence items. But they should be timely at the time of the briefing.
2. Format Subjects should be conducive to a 5 to 10 minute oral presentation supported by one to half a dozen 8" x 10" graphics.
3. Efficiency Subjects should be ones on which we are already working for other reasons.

B. Criteria for substantive intelligence topics

1. Purpose Substantive intelligence topics should:
 - a. favor areas in which the President will have to make decisions,
 - b. strive to provide the President tools to question the assumptions underlying existing policies and proposals for policy change and/or,
 - c. provide the President useful simplified mental models of the world, frameworks to help him focus effectively amidst the storm of bits and pieces of information he receives each day.
2. Form The presentation of a substantive topic in ten minutes will not permit a thorough balanced discussion. So substantive topics often will be covered by two mutually supporting pieces. The first will be a ten-to-twenty page paper which will be a thorough balanced treatment of the subject matter. The second will be the topic of the discussion itself which will not try to be balanced or thorough. Rather it will focus on the aspect of the subject which can best be illustrated by an oral face to face exchange. The briefing itself will emphasize one of the following:

- a. Discussion of those aspects of the subject which are not known pointing out the current range of uncertainty, the degree to which further intelligence efforts can reduce this range, and whether such efforts appear to be worthwhile.
- b. Discussion of those aspects of the subject about which there are significant differences of opinion pointing out who believes what, and presenting a measured discussion of the pros and cons of each.
- c. Discussion of those aspects of the subject area which are uniquely associated with the DCI's responsibility, e.g. intelligence activities of a country in the context of its overall foreign policy.
- d. Discussion of examples of the overall model described in the accompanying paper when this is the primary purpose of the subject.

When an Office Director or NIO recommends a subject he should indicate whether it should be presented as a written paper plus a briefing or simply as a briefing.

3. Intelligence Nature The substantive subjects selected should have a heavy intelligence flavor to avoid the appearance of unwittingly straying into the policy arena.

C. Criteria for selecting intelligence craft subjects

1. Purpose Discussions of the intelligence craft in this arena should:

- a. favor discussions of intelligence capabilities in areas in which the President will have to make policy decisions.
- b. strictly forgo areas in which the President will have to make programmatic or other decisions in which the DCI has a bureaucratic interest. In order to preserve the sanctity of the briefing as the high point of objectivity in an otherwise partisan week, subjects like these should be addressed in separate sessions.
- c. favor areas where the integrated capability of collection and production can be clearly shown.

2. Form Presentations of subjects in the intelligence craft generally will not include delivery of a paper. When appropriate, they can include displays of hardware used or obtained, audio visual displays, etc.

D. Nuggets Sometimes an informational item will appear which should be presented to the President during the briefing because it is of special significance and would be enhanced by a face to face or special media presentation. Office Directors and NIOs knowing of such items should nominate them.